

Folktale

The Badger and the Fan



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PAIRED
READ

Fox and Cat

STRATEGIES & SKILLS

Comprehension

Strategy: Ask and Answer Questions

Skill: Theme

Vocabulary

attracted, dazzling, fabric, greed, honest, requested, soared, trudged

Vocabulary Strategy

Root Words

Word Count: 1,850



Education

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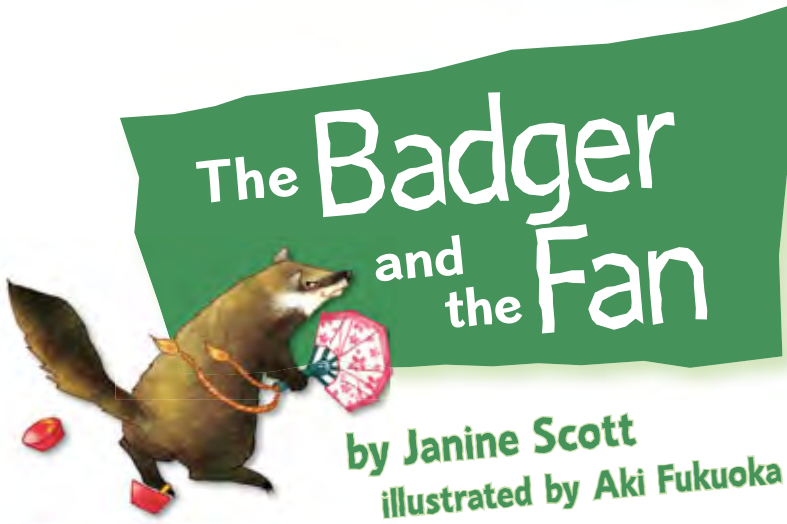
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A



Essential Question

What are some messages in animal stories?



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Chapter 1

Fun in the Forest

Long ago, in the bamboo forests of Japan, there lived three little elf-like children called *tengu*. All *tengu* children had very long noses. Their noses were always wiggling and wagging about as they laughed and played. *Tengu* children didn't have a care in the world. They were playful children who liked to have fun all the time.

One of their favorite play things was a fan made from fine silk. The silk was decorated with delicate pink cherry blossoms. The *tengu* children spent hours taking turns fanning themselves and then rolling around on the ground laughing.

Now, this was no regular fan. It was a magic fan. As the tengu children fanned themselves, their long noses did something astonishing—they changed size. When the tengu children fanned their noses with one side of the fan, their already long noses grew even longer. But when they used the other side of the fan, their noses returned to their normal size.

The tengu children played for hours and hours with the fan. They only stopped when they couldn't bear to laugh anymore. After all, too much laughing can hurt.



One day, a badger heard the tengu children laughing. He crept toward them and hid behind a rock. He watched them play with the magic fan, making their noses grow and shrink.

“Hmmm,” said the badger. “That fan could be very useful. I want to have one, too!”

The badger smiled as he thought about what mischief he could do with the magic fan. Soon he came up with a plan. He would distract the tengu children so he could steal the fan.

The badger was a cunning creature with special powers. He could change himself into any shape or form. He could be a blossom on a cherry tree, a giant panda, or even a human. And a human is exactly what the badger decided to be.



The badger disguised himself as a young woman. He wore a long red kimono painted with beautiful white cranes. The kimono was fastened with a wide obi around the waist. He wore white socks and red sandals on his feet.

The badger's black, shiny hair was tied in a bun high on his head. He wore beautiful flowers and combs in his hair. The badger thought he looked just like a young Japanese woman. He knew that the tengu children would think so too.



The badger trudged toward the tengu children. Then he remembered his disguise, and he tried to walk less like a badger and more like a human. He carried a plate with four delicious buns filled with sweet red bean paste.

“Hello,” said the badger to the tengu children. “Would you like to try my delicious buns?”

The tengu children liked eating as much as they liked laughing. Quick as a flash, they gathered around the badger and each gobbled up a bun. Then the tengu children looked at one another in dismay.

“Who will eat the last bun?” they cried.

As the tengu children began to argue about the extra bun, the badger put his plan into action. He suggested they have a contest. He requested that they close their eyes and hold their breath. The one who did so for the longest would win the last bun.

The tengu children thought that this was a wonderful idea. They all took a giant gulp of air and squeezed their eyes shut. And even though they were usually very mischievous, none of them peeked to see what the others were doing.

If they had, they would have discovered that as soon as they closed their eyes, the badger had snatched the magic fan. Quickly and quietly, he disappeared into the bamboo forest.



Chapter 2

Badger's Trick

The badger laughed and laughed. It had been so easy to fool those honest tengu children. They really shouldn't have trusted a stranger bearing gifts, even when the stranger looked like a young woman.

The badger traveled through the forest, wondering how he could use the magic fan.

Soon the badger stumbled upon a house. Inside was a dazzling sight. A pretty girl stood in a beautiful room arranging pink blossoms in a vase. She was dressed in a kimono made of the finest fabric. The girl was the daughter of the richest man in Japan. She had long jet-black hair and a very small nose—but not for long!

The badger's greed helped him dream up a plan. He crept up behind the girl and fanned her nose with the magic fan. In an instant, her nose grew a yard long. Soon the forest was filled with the girl's screams.



The girl's father heard her cries and came running. When he saw his beautiful daughter, he was shocked. Her nose was as long as a stalk of bamboo!

He demanded that the best doctors in Japan come right away. He hoped that they would have a cure for his daughter's long nose. But the doctors didn't know how to make the girl's nose return to its normal size. It still stood out a yard from her face.

"How can I help my precious daughter?" asked the father.

The girl's father walked into his garden. He was used to getting what he wanted. After all, he was the richest man in Japan. He had never felt so powerless. He desperately needed someone to help his daughter.

"I will give half of my fortune to anyone who can help my daughter," he announced to everyone who had gathered at his house.

That was just what the badger had been waiting to hear. Everything was happening according to his plan.

The badger popped out from his hiding place behind a Japanese maple tree. "I can fix your daughter's nose," he shouted.





The father was surprised to see that the voice belonged to a badger. However, he was willing to try anything to solve his daughter's problem. He quickly led the badger to the girl's room.

The badger wasn't shocked to see her yard-long nose. After all, he had seen it before. The badger took out the magic fan and fanned her nose. But this time he used the other side of the fan. As expected, the girl's nose shrank to its normal size. She was so happy that her smile lit up the room!

"Thank you! You have fixed my daughter's nose. You will receive half of my fortune as a reward," said the father.

The badger smiled. Soon he would be very rich.



Chapter 3 In the Clouds

The day the badger would receive his fortune arrived. He was dressed in clothes fit for an emperor. He wore a black silk kimono jacket and gray silk pants. He carried a folded fan.

It was a hot day, and the dark colors of his clothes attracted the sun's burning rays. Soon the badger became sleepy. He went into the garden and lay down on a bench to rest. He listened to the soothing sound of water dripping into the fountain. This made him feel sleepier, but he was still hot.

The badger fanned himself. The gentle, fluttering breeze on his face felt nice. But because he was hot and sleepy, he forgot that it was the magic fan! He didn't realize that his nose was getting longer and longer and longer.

The badger's nose grew so long that it extended past the roofs of all the houses, past the trees, and past the mightiest snow-capped mountains. It soared up into the sky and tickled the white, fluffy clouds.





Up in the clouds, some workers were building a huge bridge across the Milky Way. To their surprise, they saw the long nose of the badger appear through the clouds.

“This will make a perfect pole for our new bridge!” one of them exclaimed.

So they grabbed it and pulled and pulled with all their might.

“Ouch, ouch, OUCH!” shouted the badger, who suddenly woke up from his nap. “What’s happening?”

The badger quickly realized what he had done. He started fanning his nose rapidly with the other side of the magic fan as he was being pulled up, up, up—but it was too late.

The workers gave one final and powerful pull on the badger's nose. The badger disappeared up into the sky, and no one ever saw him again.

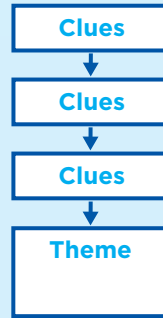
In his new home in the sky, the badger came to realize that his greed had led to his misfortune. If he had worked hard and been honest, he could have earned and enjoyed rich rewards in life.



Respond to Reading

Summarize

Use your graphic organizer to summarize the message in *The Badger and the Fan*.



Text Evidence

1. How can you tell that this story is a folktale? Identify two features that tell you this. **GENRE**
2. How does the badger learn his lesson? Include details from the story in your answer. **THEME**
3. What is the root word of *demanded* on page 9? What is another word you can make from this root word? **ROOT WORDS**
4. Write about what the badger wanted, how he went about getting it, and what happened in the end. **WRITE ABOUT READING**

Compare Texts

Read about Fox, who thought he was clever
—until he met Cat.

FOX and Cat

Once there was a sly old fox who was very cunning. He was a trickster who liked to dream up tricks and traps to fool all the other animals in the forest.

Cat was nothing like Fox. He was curious, cautious, and kind. He didn't like to play tricks on other animals at all. Cat preferred to lie around in the sunshine and sleep.

One day, Fox and Cat were talking to each other about how they escaped from enemies.

“Well, I have a whole bag of tricks I can use when I need to get away,” boasted Fox. “I can outrun them, I can outsmart them, and I can outfox them! In fact, I have hundreds of different ways to escape from danger.”



Cat listened to Fox's bragging. Cat knew that he didn't need a whole bag of tricks to escape from his enemies.

"I have nine lives," explained Cat to Fox. "And I still have all of them, thanks to my one and only means of escape."

Fox was so busy describing his tricks that he didn't even ask Cat what his method of escape was.

"I can dig a giant hole that the hounds will fall into as they chase me," continued Fox. "I can lie in a pile of autumn leaves so that the hounds can't see me. I can wrap my large, bushy tail around my body and pretend to be a sleeping squirrel, or I can ..."

Fox was so absorbed in his boasting that he didn't hear a pack of hounds thundering toward them.

As quick as lightning, Cat skedaddled up a nearby tree. He called down to Fox from his hiding place. "What are you going to do, Fox? What's your escape plan?"

Fox was still standing under the tree in the same spot. "Hmmm, I could try this way to escape," said Fox to himself. "Wait ... hang on a minute, this would be a far better way ... oh, this is a brilliant idea ..."

And so it went. Fox thought up plan after plan. But as he did, the hounds got closer and closer. And even though Fox had just come up with perhaps his most brilliant plan yet, it was too late. At that moment, the hounds surrounded him!

If only Fox had known that it's better to have one well-thought-out plan than a hundred that won't work. If he had, he would still be here to tell the tale!



Make Connections

What is the message of the story *Fox and Cat*?

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Compare the badger's tricks with Fox's tricks. How are they similar? How are they different?

TEXT TO TEXT

Focus on Literary Elements

Imagery Imagery is descriptive language that helps us make pictures in our mind. A writer uses imagery to describe how something looks, sounds, smells, feels, or tastes. We use these images to help us understand a story better.

Read and Find On page 7 of *The Badger and the Fan*, the writer uses the words “giant gulp of air” and “squeezed their eyes shut” to help us to picture the way the children held their breath and closed their eyes. On page 9, the writer describes the girl’s nose as being “as long as a stalk of bamboo.” This simile compares a stalk of bamboo with the girl’s long nose. It helps the reader imagine what her nose looked like.

Your Turn

Choose a character, place, or event in *The Badger and the Fan* and use imagery to describe it vividly. Write your description down, then share it with someone else in your group.

Literature Circles

Fiction

Thinkmark

Setting

Where did *The Badger and the Fan* take place?

When did it take place?

Characters

Who are the main characters?

How would you describe the badger?

Plot

What did the badger want?

How did he solve his problem?

What went wrong?

How did the story end?

Conclusions

What conclusions can you draw about the best way to achieve goals?

Author's Purpose

Why do you think the author wrote *The Badger and the Fan*?

Literary Lessons

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Grade 4 • Unit 2 Week 1

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